

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today sent a letter to Postmaster General Patrick R. Donahoe stating his firm opposition to the proposed closure of the United States Postal Service's Processing and Distribution Facility in Binghamton. A recent Area Mail Processing (AMP) feasibility study proposed the possible consolidation of the Binghamton facility, which employs 79 people, with a similar facility in Syracuse, New York. Hinchey questioned the study, arguing that it failed to account for the economic impact caused by a drop off in services and loss of local jobs.

"The economic benefits USPS claims it will achieve by eliminating this facility are questionable given the long additional distances mail will have to travel after being sorted in Syracuse and then delivered back to Binghamton," said Hinchey. "What cannot be questioned, however, is the negative economic impact of losing 79 jobs in the Binghamton area, combined with the loss of service at a time when this region is still struggling to overcome an economic downturn and the lingering impact of recent record setting flooding. Additionally, I find it unacceptable that next day service for First Class mail will be lost once processing is moved to Syracuse. For these and many other reasons, I firmly believe that the USPS should maintain its current operations in Binghamton."

Hinchey is a cosponsor of legislation designed to help ease the financial challenges currently faced by USPS. The United States Postal Service Pension Obligation Recalculation and Restoration Act of 2011 (H.R. 1351) would free up billions in financial resources for USPS every year. Under current law, the Postal Service is required to pre-fund healthcare benefits of future retirees at a cost of \$5 billion annually. H.R. 1351 would help reduce the financial burden of this requirement by allowing the Postal Service to use billions of dollars in pension overpayments to pre-fund healthcare benefits of future retirees. The legislation is strongly supported by the National Association of Letter Carriers.

The full text of Hinchey's [letter](#) follows.

December 1, 2011

Mr. Patrick R. Donahoe
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service

475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, DC 20260-0010

Dear Mr. Donahoe:

I want to express my profound disappointment that USPS's Binghamton Processing and Distribution Facility is once again being targeted for cuts pursuant to a recently concluded Area Mail Processing (AMP) feasibility study. I understand that the AMP proposal for the Binghamton operation is under review at USPS's Northeast Area Office and I urge you to give thorough consideration to the negative impacts that the AMP's proposed changes would have on customers, postal workers, and the community.

I recognize USPS is under tremendous pressure to streamline mail handling in order to remain economically viable in a changing market. I understand the financial stress that USPS is under and, as you may know, I have been pushing for reforms to bring USPS relief from mandated overpayments to the Federal Employee Retirement System as well as the prefunding requirements for retiree health benefits. While Congress works to solve the problems confounding the agency, I find it imprudent for USPS to force changes, such as what is being proposed for Binghamton. Doing so would be a serious mistake.

I cannot support a consolidation plan that adversely impacts USPS employees while diminishing the level of service my constituents depend on from USPS. The economic benefits USPS claims it will achieve by eliminating this facility are questionable given the long additional distances mail will have to travel after being sorted in Syracuse and then delivered back to Binghamton. What cannot be questioned, however, is the negative economic impact of losing 79 jobs in the Binghamton area, combined with the loss of service at a time when this region is still struggling to overcome an economic downturn and the lingering impact of recent record setting flooding. Additionally, I find it unacceptable that next day service for First Class mail will be lost once processing is moved to Syracuse. For these and many other reasons, I firmly believe that the USPS should maintain its current operations in Binghamton.

I appreciate your consideration of my views on this important matter and ask to be kept informed on any decisions relating to this process.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

Maurice D. Hinchey